

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9-14, 24 and 25 remain in the application, all of these claims standing as rejected under 35 USC 103(a).

Claims 1 and 24 were rejected under 35 USC 112, which has been obviated by amending those claims to substitute the term "trim piece" for "cover".

In claim 24, the term "particular" has been deleted.

Claims 1 and 24 have also been amended to recite the controlled operation of the laser beam used to score the trim piece to a regularly varying depth creating a series of partial penetrations, to even more clarity distinguish over the references relied on by the Examiner in rejecting these claims.

Reconsideration of the rejection of all the claims under 35 USC 103(a) is respectfully requested.

The Examiner states that Nanbu et al teaches the claimed invention except for the two layer construction and the use of a laser beam to create the scoring. However, Nanbu et al specifically requires irregularly varying depth scoring to insure that the scoring creates maximum weakness in the center of the trim piece, which depth decreases along the scoring pattern.

Applicant respectfully disagrees that changing the shape of the scoring in Nanbu et al would be within the level of ordinary skill in the art, to create a regularly varying depth pattern, as asserted by the Examiner. It would not be suggested to one skilled in the art to modify Nanbu et al to defeat the function sought by the arrangement described therein, i.e., a varying tear strength preweakening is necessary to the objective of Nanbu et al.

If a proposed modification would render the prior art reference unsatisfactory for its intended purpose then there is no suggestion or motivation to make the proposed

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modification. See MPEP 2143.01 and In re Gordon 221 USPQ 1125 (Fed. Cir. 1984).

The regularly varied depth scoring has been found to reliably preweaken the trim piece without overweakening the cover layer so as to lead to cracking and externally visible lines. This is distinguished from a constant depth scoring which must be controlled to extreme precision levels to avoid either overweakening or underpreweakening. The scoring comprised of thicker regions interspersed with partial penetrations can much more easily achieve an adequate preweakening which does not overweaken the trim piece by since the trim piece is not unduly weakened the partial penetrations because of the presence of the intervening thicker area. Thus, the claimed scoring shape is not a mere matter of design choice but rather produces an important result not appreciated by any of the prior art cited by the Examiner.

See also In re Chu 36 USPQ2d 1089 (Fed. Cir. 1995).

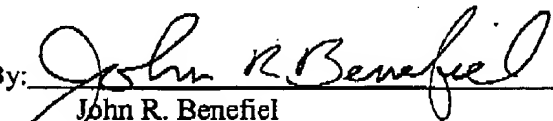
Proos, U.S. 5,335,935 clearly teaches only spaced apart through perforations, not the series of partial penetrations as now set forth in the claims, and does not provide any suggestion of the regularly varying depth scoring producing a series of partial penetrations.

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 13, 2003

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